

Lesson 15: Handout 3

Upstanders and Bystanders during the Holocaust (Sample)

1. Name of reading: The Courage of LeChambon
2. Where does this story take place? (Locate it on a map.) Le Chambon, France (a village in the mountains of southeast France)
3. Identify the significant choices made in this story:
The residents of Le Chambon, even the children, decided to hide Jews and others. They saved about 5,000 people.
All of the residents chose not to tell the police about the Jews and others being hidden in their village.
The residents also kept the location of Minister Trocme secret so that he was not arrested again.
4. How do you think this individual, group, or nation would explain the choice they made? What would they say if you asked them, "Why did you make this choice?"
They would say they decided to rescue Jews and others fleeing the Nazis because "it was the human thing to do." This means that they believed that people are supposed to protect and help each other. Some residents, like Magda Trocme, might not have felt like she really had a choice. She said the choice was not "complicated," but that they merely "did what had to be done."
5. What were the potential and actual consequences of their actions? How might the specific context (where and when this happened) shape the consequences?
The residents of Le Chambon could have been arrested and sent to concentration camps for saving Jews. Indeed, some members of the community were arrested and one member was killed in a concentration camp. People were putting not only themselves, but also their families, at risk by sheltering Jews. The fact that Le Chambon is in the mountains might have made it easier for them to take these risks because it was more difficult for outsiders to get to the community. Also, their experience as being a religious minority in their own country might have made them more sympathetic to the Jews.
6. How would this individual, group, or nation complete the following sentence:
I feel responsible for protecting and caring for all human beings.
7. What symbol represents the choices made by this individual, group, or nation? Describe it or draw it here.
A mountain with a house on top of it and lots of people holding hands around the house. This symbol represents the fact that Le Chambon is located in the mountains and is somewhat isolated from others. The house represents a place of safety. And the people holding hands around the house illustrates how the residents were united in their efforts to keep Jews and others safe during the war.
8. Select one thought-provoking or important quotation from this reading and write it here.
"We didn't protect the Jews because we were moral or heroic people. We helped them because it was the human thing to do."